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EXCALIBUR™

**GIANT-SIZED
SPECTACULAR!**



30TH
ANNIVERSARY
1962 - 1992



**THE AMAZING
SPIDER-MAN**



ALAN DAVIS
& MARK FACHS
—
BASED ON AN IDEA BY
SVEN LARSEN

THE POWERFUL CAPTAIN BRITAIN, THE SHAPE-CHANGING MEGGAN, THE INTANGIBLE SHADOWCAT, THE TELEPORTING NIGHTCRAWLER, THE MYSTERIOUS PHOENIX, THE EVER-UNPREDICTABLE WIDGET AND LOCKHEED THE DRAGON FORGED IN THE FIRES OF THEIR TRAGIC PASTS, THEY HAVE Banded TOGETHER TO FIGHT A MODERN DAY CRUSADE AGAINST THE FORCES OF EVIL! STAN LEE PRESENTS...

EXCALIBUR!

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JOE ROSAS COLORIST MICHAEL HEISLER LETTERER
TERRY KAYANAGH EDITOR TOM DEFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF
EXCALIBUR CREATED BY CHRIS CLAREMONT AND ALAN DAVIS

WINNER LOSES ALL

THE CAVERNOUS BASEMENT
BENEATH EXCALIBUR'S LIGHT-
HOUSE HEADQUARTERS ON THE
WEST COAST OF ENGLAND...

RACHEL, STAY
CALM. DO NOT LET
NECROM GOAD
YOU.

HE CANNOT
ACCESS THE PHOENIX
FORCE WHILE YOU KEEP
IT IN A DORMANT
STATE.

YOUR CHOICE IS
SIMPLE, RACHEL SUMMERS.
RELINQUISH THE PHOENIX
TO ME—

--OR WATCH YOUR
FRIENDS DIE AS I COMPRESS
THE MULTIVERSE OF ALTERNATE
EARTHS INTO A SINGULARITY.

I KNOW,
KURT...BUT I
CAN'T LET YOU
ALL DIE.

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ENOUGH TALK.

IF I AM TO DIE...

...I WILL DIE FIGHTING.



EEEARXXX!

THE MYSTICAL SWORDS OF Z'RIA ARE A POTENT ANTIDOTE TO NECROM'S EVIL...

...IT IS A PITY THIS WAS ONLY A PSYCHIC PROJECTION.

IT'S MY FAULT NECROM ACQUIRED THE POTENTIAL TO CONTROL THE PHOENIX FORCE--AND NOW I'M GOING TO HAVE TO FIGHT HIM FOR IT.

YOU CAN'T CHANGE THE INEVITABLE, KYLLIN.

AND I WILL NOT DIE EASILY.

NO, RACHEL! IF, AS NECROM CLAIMS, HE IS POWERFUL ENOUGH TO WARP REALITY-- WHY HAS HE NOT MADE A DIRECT ATTACK?

I THINK HE IS BLUFFING.



THEN WHAT'S CAUSED THE SUDDEN INCREASE IN CROSS-TIME MIRAGES THAT ARE ALL AROUND US?

WE HAVE LIVED WITH THESE FLEETING APPARITIONS SINCE WE MOVED INTO THE LIGHTHOUSE.

IF THEY DO SIGNAL A CONVERGENCE OF REALITIES, IT BEGAN A LONG TIME AGO. WE HAVE ONLY NECROM'S WORD THAT HE IS THE CAUSE.





BOTH ARE SAFE. THEY APPEARED TO VANISH BECAUSE THEY LEFT THE AREA OF LOCALIZED STABILITY...

...CREATED BY THE FOURTH-DIMENSIONAL PULSE I'VE BEEN MONITORING.

IT'S MORE FOCUSED NOW.

I CAN CONFIRM WIDGET IS NOT RESPONSIBLE...



...RACHEL IS GENERATING THE TEMPORAL SHIELD.

THAT CAN'T BE. I'M A TELEPATH. EVEN WITH THE PHOENIX FORCE, I CAN'T MANIPULATE TIME.



THAT'S NOT TRUE, RACHEL.

WHILE YOU WERE IN THE FUTURE, YOU EXCHANGED MY CONSCIOUSNESS WITH AN OLDER VERSION OF MYSELF.

AND, SOMEHOW, YOU MOVED YOURSELF BACK THROUGH TIME.



OF COURSE... I REMEMBER NOW.

WE TRIED TO CHANGE OUR PRESENT BY ALTERING THE PAST, BUT WE FAILED.

THE X-MEN AND ALL THE OTHERS WERE DEAD. IT WAS DOWN TO ME AND KATE—THE ADULT KITTY OF THE FUTURE.

PROJECT NIMROD HAD PERFECTED A MORE EFFICIENT SENTINEL.

MUTANTKIND WAS DOOMED.



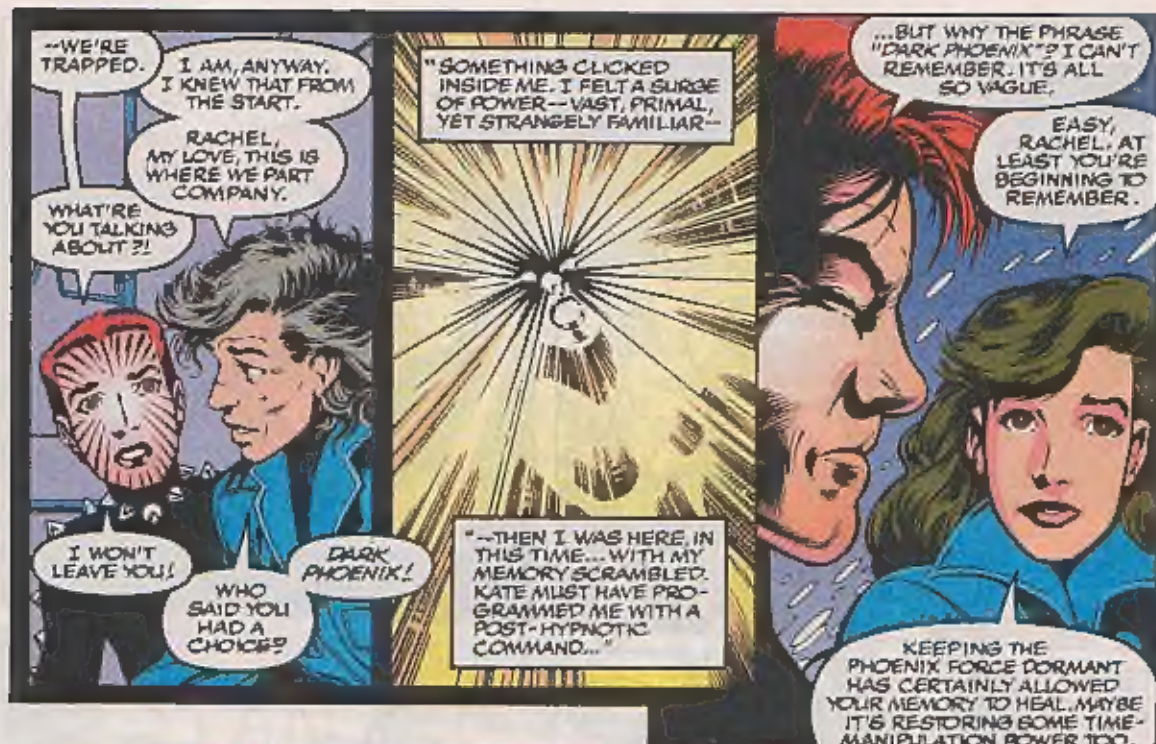
"WE BLUFFED OUR WAY INTO THE TOP SECRET CYBERBOTANICS COMPLEX."



"WE REACHED THE PROJECT NERVE CENTER BEFORE OUR COVER WAS BLOWN..."

ONCE THE DOOR SEALS, RACHEL, TELEKINETICALLY SCRAMBLE THE LOCKS. THEY'LL HAVE TO BLAST THEIR WAY INSIDE.

THEN WHAT?! THIS LAB'S SHIELDED AGAINST YOUR PHASING POWER--



--WE'RE TRAPPED.

I AM, ANYWAY. I KNEW THAT FROM THE START.

RACHEL, MY LOVE, THIS IS WHERE WE PART COMPANY.

WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

I WON'T LEAVE YOU!

WHO SAID YOU HAD A CHOICE?

DARK PHOENIX!

"SOMETHING CLICKED INSIDE ME. I FELT A SURGE OF POWER-- VAST, PRIMAL, YET STRANGELY FAMILIAR--

--THEN I WAS HERE, IN THIS TIME... WITH MY MEMORY SCRAMBLED. KATE MUST HAVE PROGRAMMED ME WITH A POST-HYPNOTIC COMMAND..."

...BUT WHY THE PHRASE "DARK PHOENIX"? I CAN'T REMEMBER. IT'S ALL SO VAGUE.

EASY, RACHEL. AT LEAST YOU'RE BEGINNING TO REMEMBER.

KEEPING THE PHOENIX FORCE DORMANT HAS CERTAINLY ALLOWED YOUR MEMORY TO HEAL. MAYBE IT'S RESTORING SOME TIME-MANIPULATION POWER TOO.



WE CANNOT WORRY ABOUT THAT NOW.

WE MUST PROCEED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT EVEN IF NECROM IS NOT THE CAUSE OF OUR SITUATION...

...HE KNOWS ENOUGH TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT.

AND, WE MUST STAY TOGETHER. WE CANNOT RISK FURTHER CONFUSION.



I CAN TRANSPORT OUR WHOLE GROUP TO THE SURFACE IN A SPHERE OF BOLD LIGHT.

GOOD IDEA, CERISE...



...AND JUST BLAST YOUR WAY INTO THE CELLAR ABOVE-- "BIG" BRIAN WOULD NEVER MAKE IT THROUGH THE DOORWAY.



MEANWHILE...

SLOW DOWN, FERON.

YOU MUST BE WARY OF NECROM'S POWER.

EVEN NOW, THE SKY IS CORRUPTED AS THE MULTIVERSE CONVERGENCE SPREADS.



LET ME GO, I AM NOT AFRAID.

BECAUSE YOU DO NOT KNOW WHAT NECROM IS CAPABLE OF, BOY. HE ENSLAVED MY WORLD, DRAINED THE LIFE FORCE FROM THE PEOPLE--

AND SLEW YOUR LOVER, SATHEEN.



NECROM!

ARE YOU READY TO REJOIN YOUR WITCH QUEEN... IN DEATH?



IT IS YOU WHO WILL DIE, EVIL ONE.



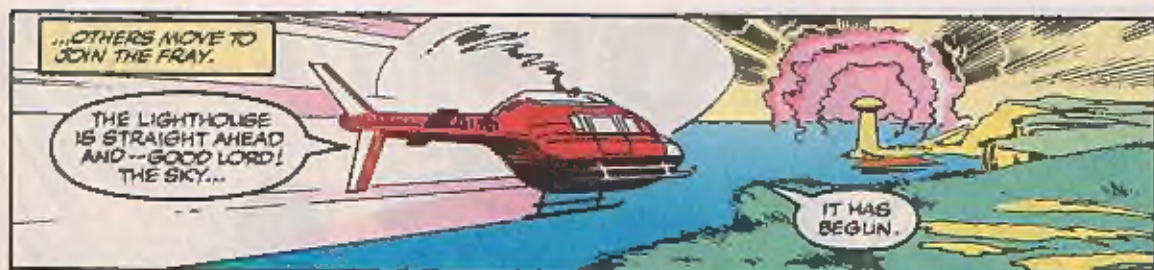
HAH! IS THAT YOUR BEST, SPAWN OF FERON?



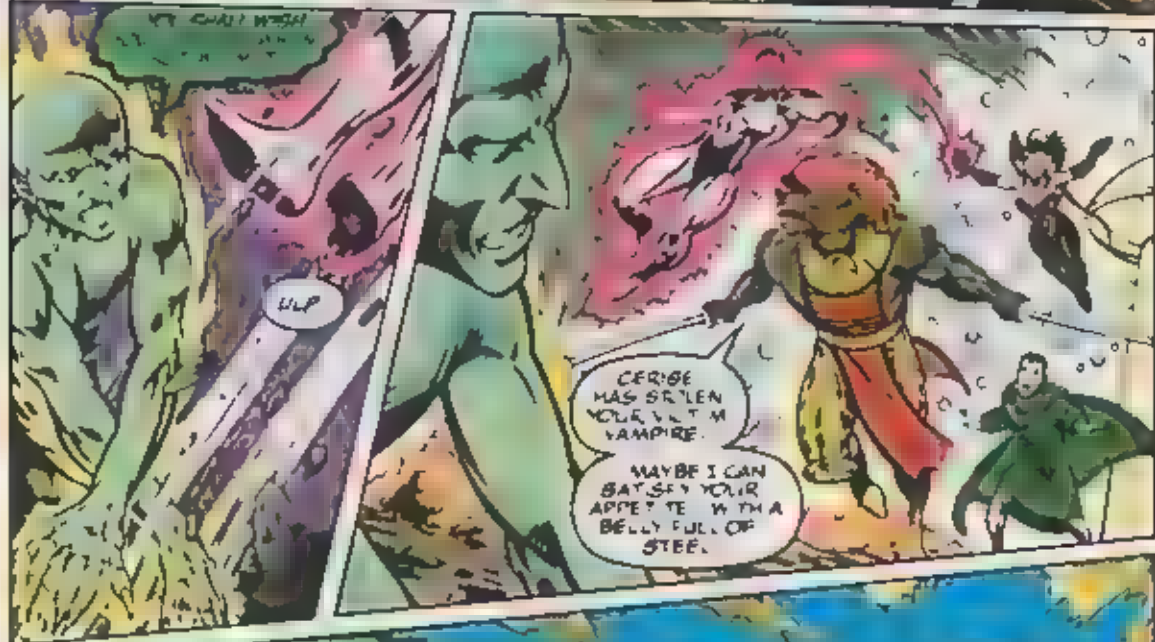
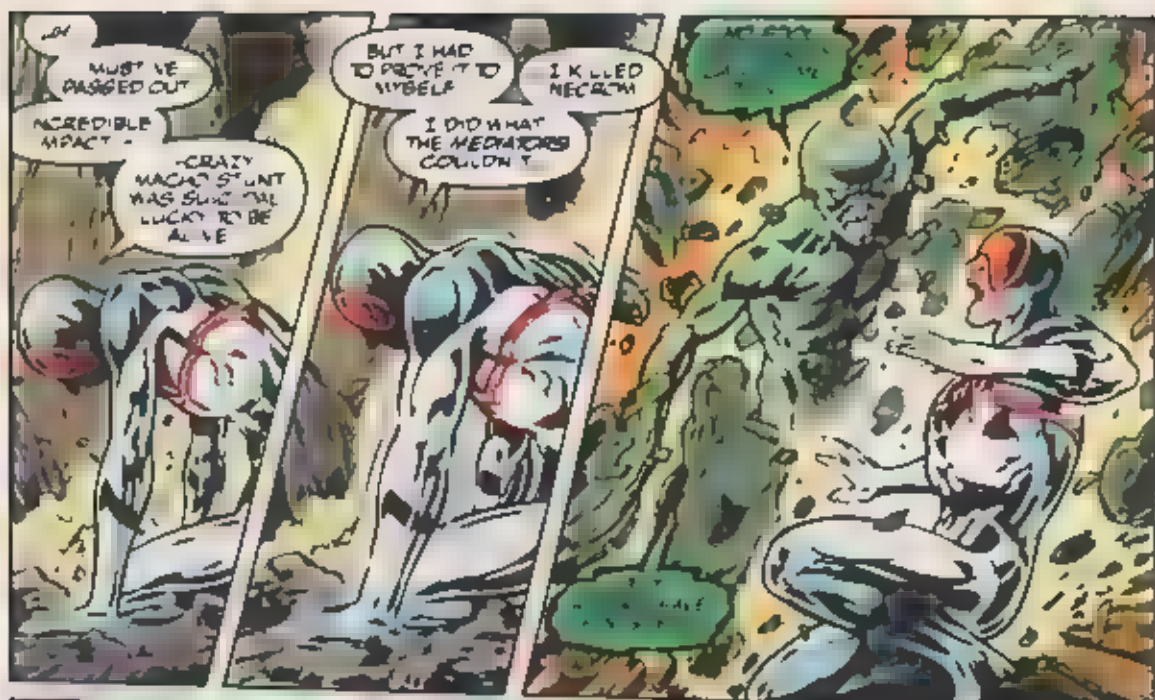
LET ME SHOW YOU REAL POWER...

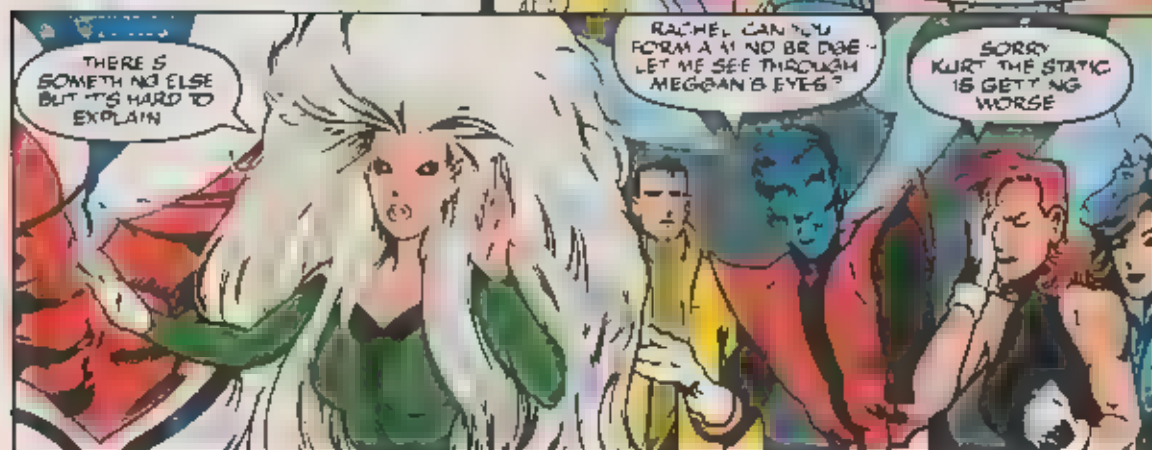
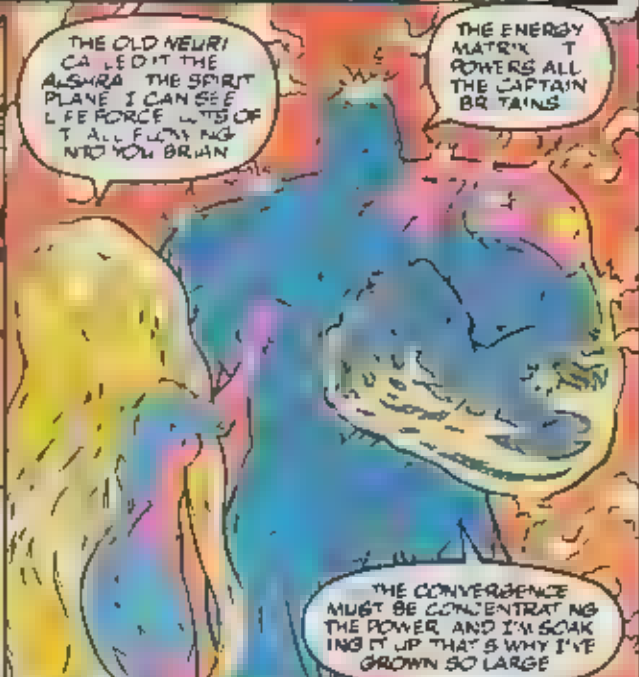
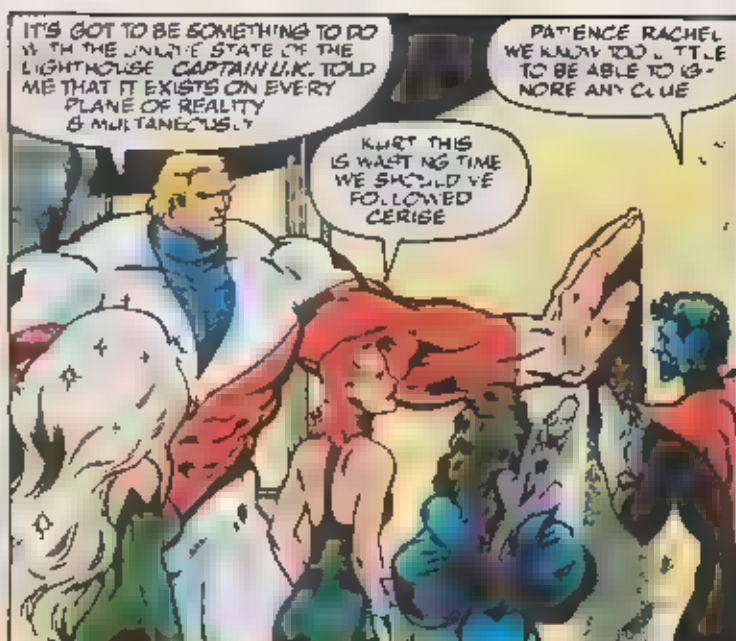
...THEN I WILL DRINK YOUR LIFE FORCE.

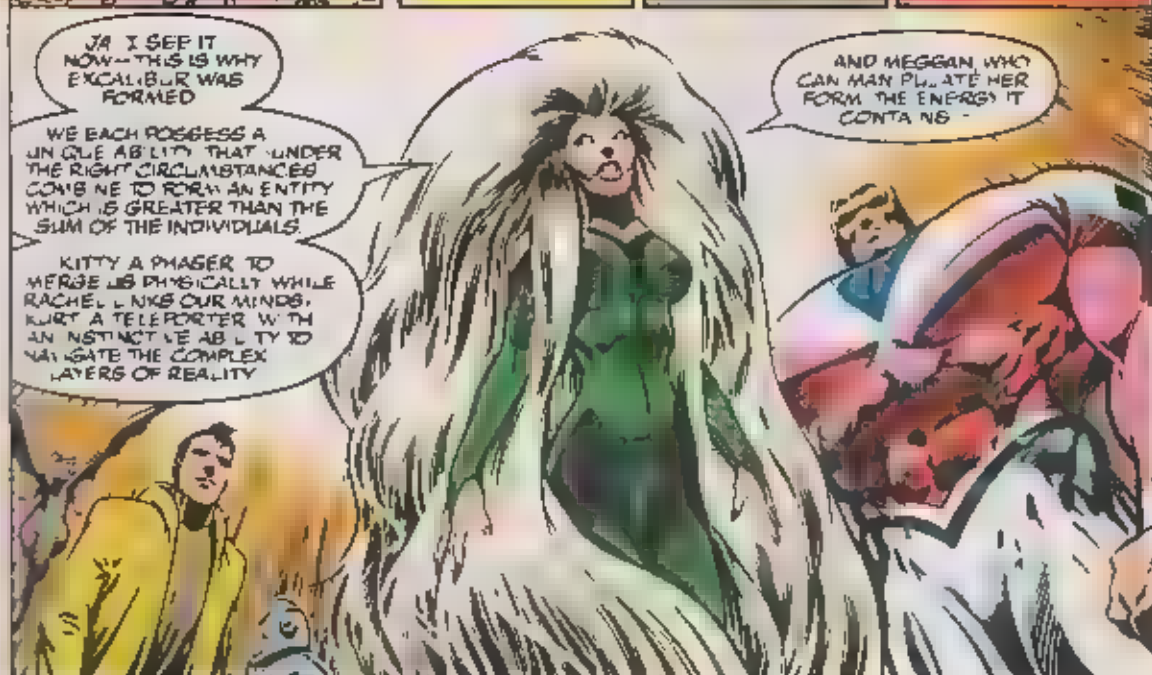
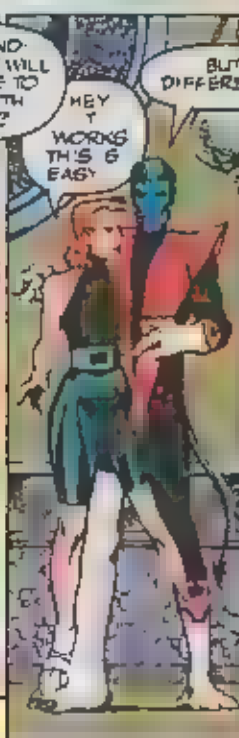
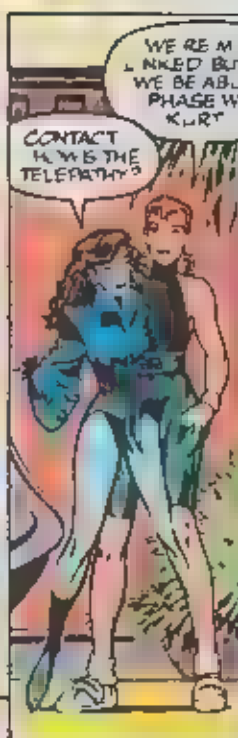
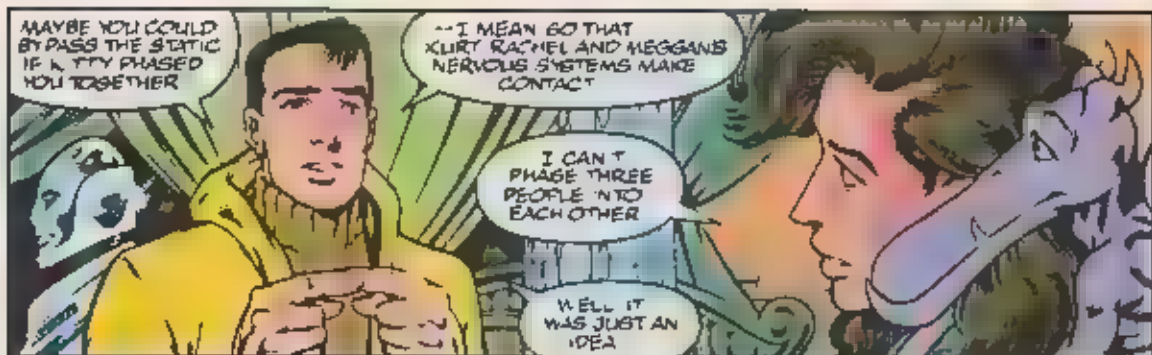
AS FERON STRUGGLES TO DEFLECT NECROM'S ATTACK...













AND THE ENERGY YOU CONTAIN BE AN

YOU ARE THE POWERHOUSE

BUT WHY'D TO DO WHAT?



TO HALT THE CONVERGENCE. MEIN FREUD. YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHEN WE MERGE

YES THE ENERGY MATRIX IS THE CAUSE



...IT'S COLLAPSING...

-AND AS IT SHRINKS IT'S DRAWING ALL THE PLANES OF REALITY TOGETHER

BRIAN ER GUNS THIS SALL TO NEAT T CAN'T BE GOING DENCE



I KNOW WE ARE BEING MANIPULATED

BUT THE CONVERGENCE IS SPREADING WITH GEOMETRIC PROGRESSION



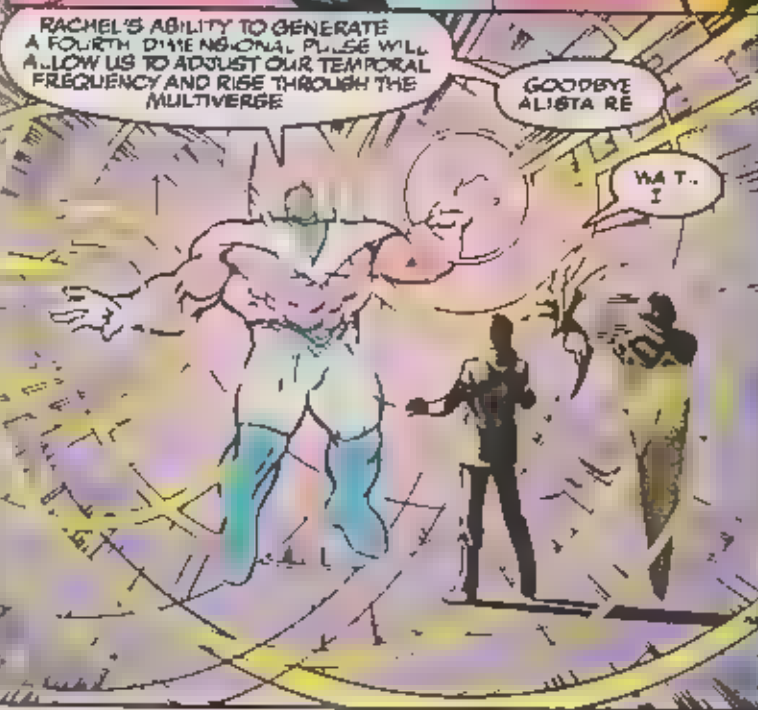
WHAT ABOUT NECROM?

WE CAN STOP IT IF WE ACT IMMEDIATELY



NECROM HAS ENTERED THE LIGHTHOUSE THROUGH THE OBSERVATION DOME

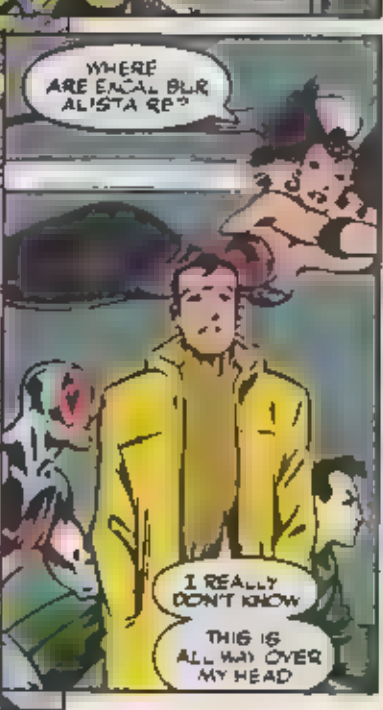
HE'S MINE



RACHEL'S ABILITY TO GENERATE A FOURTH DIMENSIONAL PULSE WILL ALLOW US TO ADJUST OUR TEMPORAL FREQUENCY AND RISE THROUGH THE MULTIVERSE

GOODBYE ALISTAIR

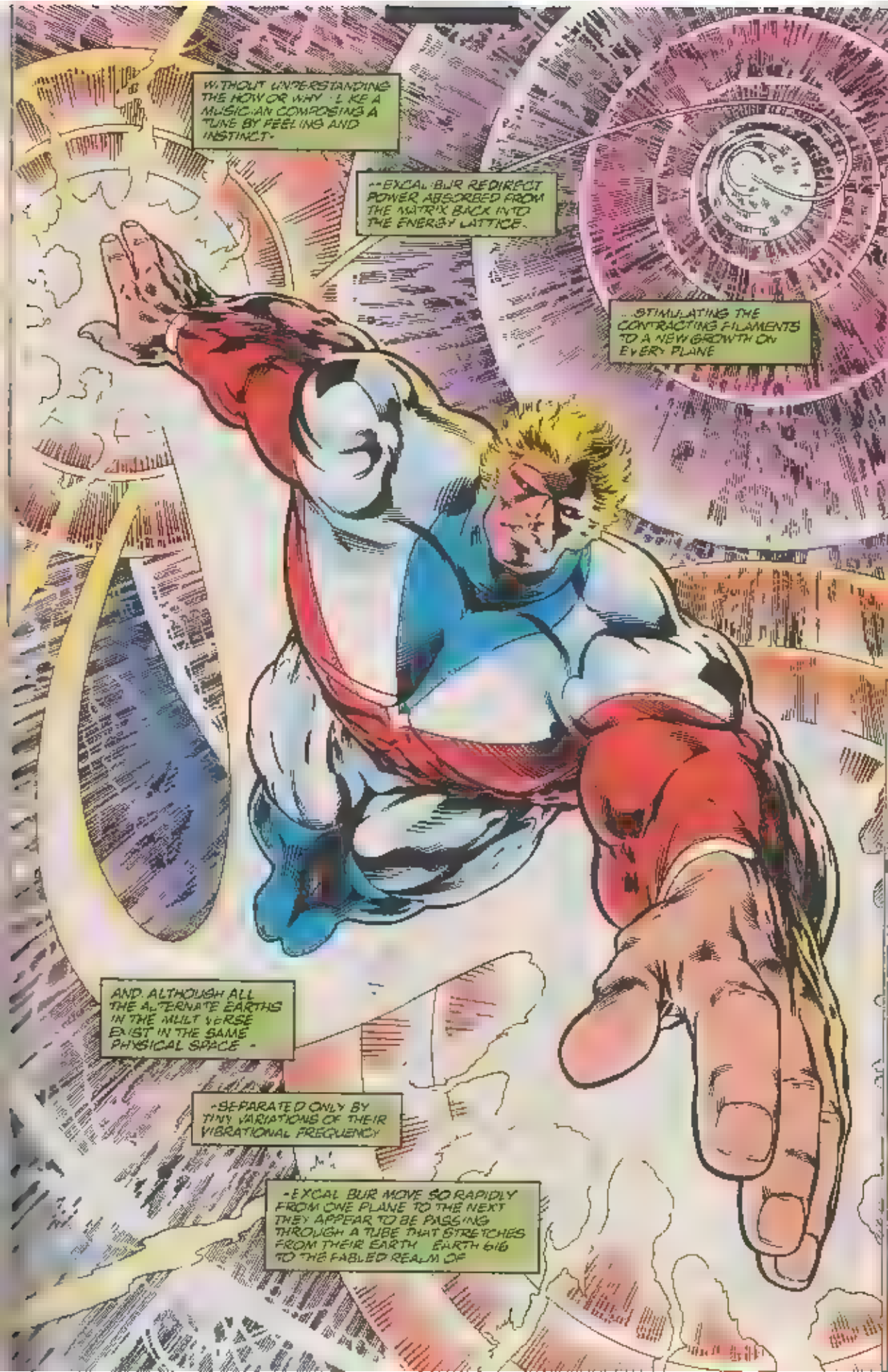
WA T.



WHERE ARE ENAL BUR ALISTAIR?

I REALLY DON'T KNOW

THIS IS ALL WAY OVER MY HEAD



WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING
THE HOW OR WHY, I KEA A
MUSIC, AN COMPOSING A
TUNE BY FEELING AND
INSTINCT.

--EXCALBUR REDIRECT
POWER ABSORBED FROM
THE MATRIX BACK INTO
THE ENERGY LATTICE.

...STIMULATING THE
CONTRACTING FILAMENTS
TO A NEW GROWTH ON
EVERY PLANE

AND, ALTHOUGH ALL
THE ALTERNATE EARTHS
IN THE MULTIVERSE
EXIST IN THE SAME
PHYSICAL SPACE -

-SEPARATED ONLY BY
TINY VARIATIONS OF THEIR
VIBRATIONAL FREQUENCY

-EXCALBUR MOVE SO RAPIDLY
FROM ONE PLANE TO THE NEXT
THEY APPEAR TO BE PASSING
THROUGH A TUBE THAT STRETCHES
FROM THEIR EARTH, EARTH 616
TO THE FABLED REALM OF

OTHERWORLD

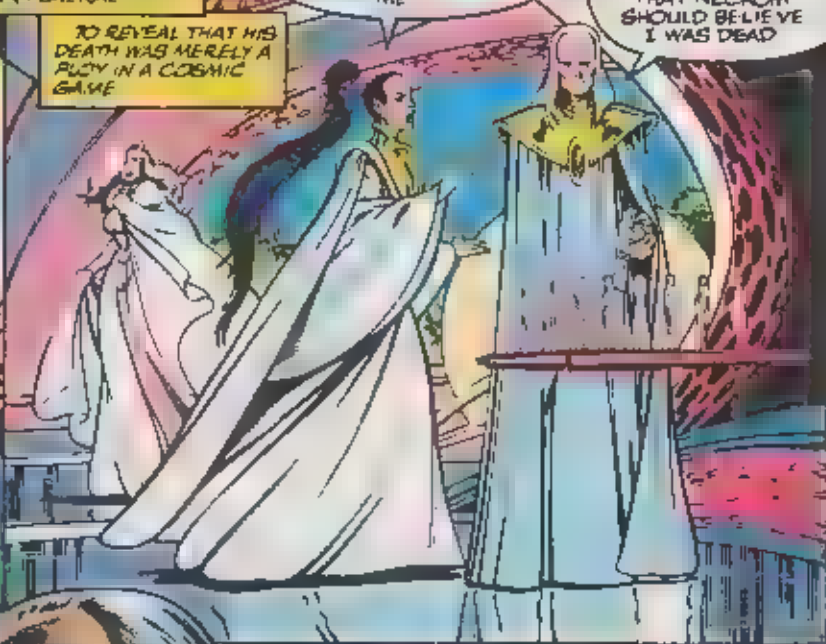
ROMA'S STARLIGHT
CITADEL

WHEREIN MERLYN
HAS RETURNED FIVE
YEARS AFTER HIS
OWN FUNERAL

TO REVEAL THAT HIS
DEATH WAS MERELY A
PLOY IN A COSMIC
GAME

WHY DID YOU
DECEIVE ME FATHER?
COULD YOU NOT TRUST
ME?

TRUST WAS NOT
THE ISSUE, ROMA.
IT WAS ESSENTIAL
THAT NECROM
SHOULD BELIEVE
I WAS DEAD



WHO IS
NECROM?

THE
SORCERER
SUPREME OF
MY RACE

I WAS
HIS STUDENT.
SO TOO WAS
THE ORIGINAL
FERON

--THE FORSEAR
OF THAT HYBRID
UPSTART WHO NOW
BEARS HIS NAME



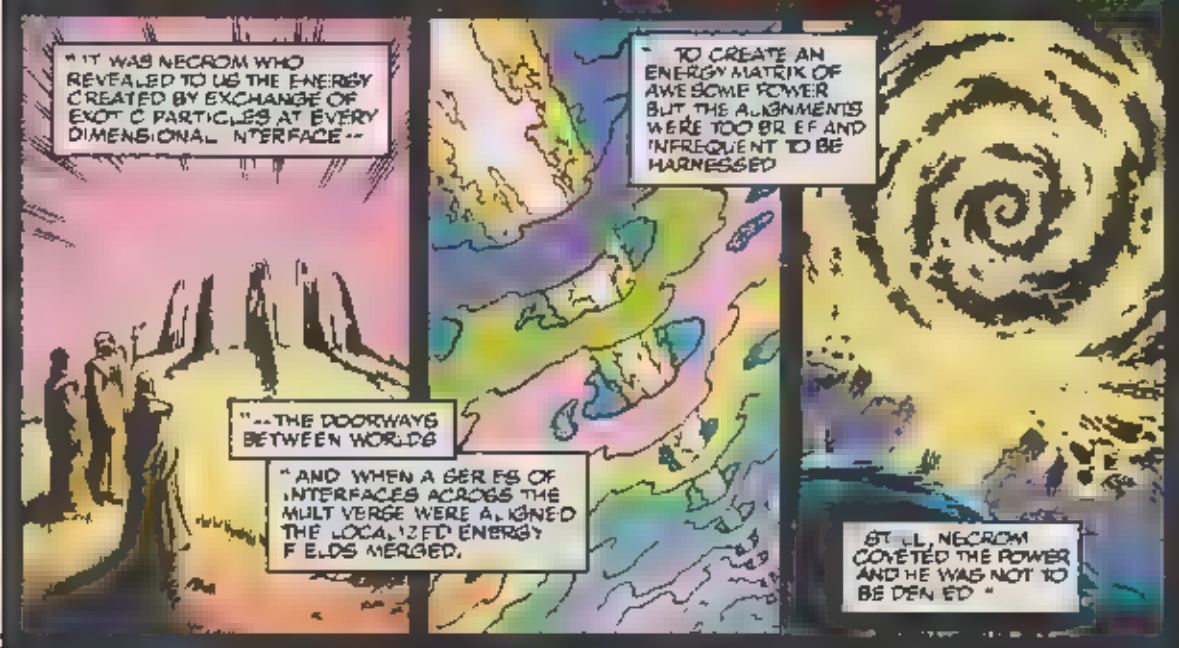
"IT WAS NECROM WHO
REVEALED TO US THE ENERGY
CREATED BY EXCHANGE OF
EXOTIC PARTICLES AT EVERY
DIMENSIONAL INTERFACE--"

"TO CREATE AN
ENERGY MATRIX OF
AWESOME POWER
BUT THE ALIGNMENTS
WERE TOO BR E F AND
INFREQUENT TO BE
HARNESSED

"--THE DOORWAYS
BETWEEN WORLDS

"AND WHEN A SERIES OF
INTERFACES ACROSS THE
MULTIVERSE WERE ALIGNED
THE LOCALIZED ENERGY
FIELDS MERGED.

STILL, NECROM
COVETED THE POWER
AND HE WAS NOT TO
BE DENIED



SO IT WAS WE TRAVELED TO EARTHONG THE PR ME EARTH TO THE LOCATION OF AN IMM NENT ALIGNMENT

"THE INTER-FACE WAS MARKED WITH A TOWER ERECTED TO AN ELDER GOD BY A RACE THAT WAS ANC ENT WHEN ATLANTIS WAS YOUNG

"FERON PLAYED A CRUCIAL ROLE IN NECROM'S SCHEME

DECADES OF MEDITATION AND PIOUS ASCETICISM HAD ALLOWED HIM TO COMMUNICATE WITH A CELEST AL ELEMENTAL

"--NOW KNOWN AS THE PHOENIX

"AT THE MOMENT OF ALIGNMENT FERON CALLED ON THE PHOEN X AVATAR TO PROTECT THE ESSENCE OF THE TOWER THROUGH THE MULTIVERSE

" SO THAT IT EXISTED ON EVERY PLANE OF REALITY SIMULTANEOUSLY--

"-- LIKE A COSMIC LYNCHPIN THREADED THROUGH THE MULTI-VERSE

"BUT NECROM HAD DECEIVED US. THE CREATION OF AN ENERGY MATRIX WAS MERELY THE FIRST PHASE IN A GAMBIT

" TO COMPRESS THE ALTERNATE EARTHS INTO A SINGULARITY

"HAD HE NOT MADE ONE FATAL MISCALCULATION FERON - SUSTAINED BY THE PHOEN X - RESISTED NECROM'S MIGHTY WILL

"AS THEY FOUGHT I LEAPT INTO THE SEETHING CALDRON OF THE ENERGY MATRIX

" AND WAS SWEEP ACROSS THE MULTIVERSE AS I STRUGGLED TO TAME ITS FURY "

"THE ENERGY RELEASED BY THIS DESTRUCTIVE USANITY WOULD HAVE ENDOWED NECROM WITH THE POWER OF A GOD

"NECROM COULD HAVE EASILY KILLED GENTLE FERON BUT INSTEAD TORE OUT THE PORTION OF PHOENIX FORCE THAT BONDED HIS STUDENT TO THE AVATAR."

"ENSLAVING BOTH WOULD ENDURE GREAT SUFFERING."

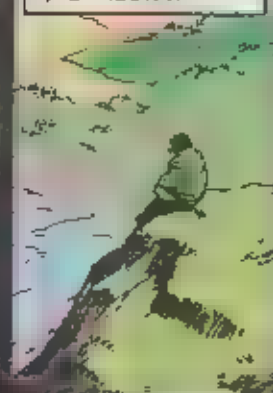


"IN AGONIZED CONFUSION THE PHOENIX FLED TO THE STARS."

"NECROM BOUND THE STOLEN PHOENIX FORCE WITH A PORTION OF HIS OWN LIFE ESSENCE AND LEFT IT TO INCUBATE IN A CORPSE."

"THE CREATION OF THE ANTI-PHOENIX WAS NECROM'S FIRST PLOY IN HIS CURRENT GAMBIT THEN HE VANISHED INTO THE MULTIVERSE."

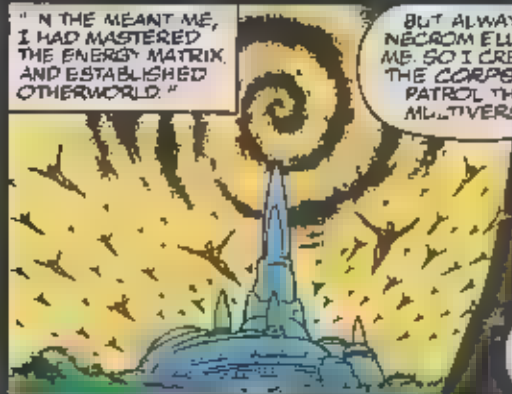
"FERON SPENT THE REST OF HIS LIFE AWAITING THE RISE OF THE ANTI-PHOENIX, HOPING TO ATONE FOR THE PAIN HE HAD CAUSED THE PHOENIX."



"HIS FINAL ACT WAS TO PLACE HIS POWER IN THE EARTH TO BE CLAIMED BY HIS HEIR."

"IN THE MEANTIME, I HAD MASTERED THE ENERGY MATRIX AND ESTABLISHED OTHERWORLD."

"BUT ALWAYS NECROM ELUDED ME. SO I CREATED THE CORPS TO PATROL THE MULTIVERSE."



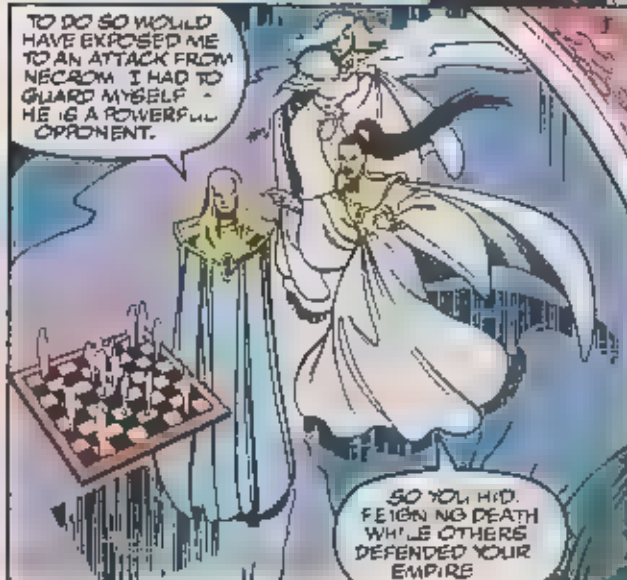
"AND I BEGAN A COUNTER GAMBIT."

"WAS ALL THIS DECEPTION REALLY NECESSARY? COULD YOU NOT HAVE REPAIRED THE ENERGY MATRIX?"



"TO DO SO WOULD HAVE EXPOSED ME TO AN ATTACK FROM NECROM. I HAD TO GUARD MYSELF - HE IS A POWERFUL OPPONENT."

"SO YOU HAD FEIGN NO DEATH WHILE OTHERS DEFENDED YOUR EMPIRE."



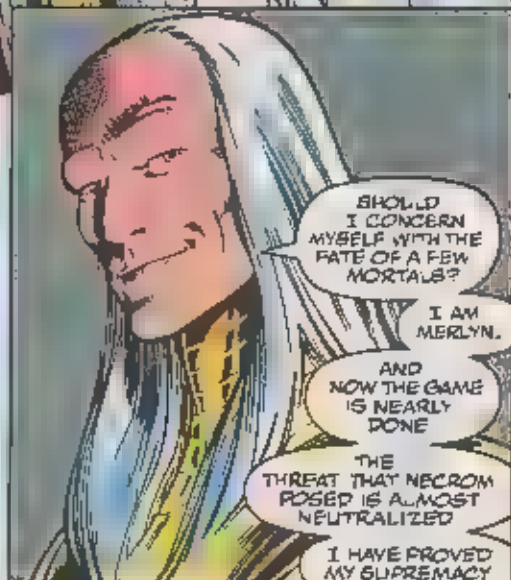
"SHOULD I CONCERN MYSELF WITH THE FATE OF A FEW MORTALS?"

"I AM MERLYN."

"AND NOW THE GAME IS NEARLY DONE."

"THE THREAT THAT NECROM POSED IS ALMOST NEUTRALIZED."

"I HAVE PROVED MY SUPREMACY."



WHERE THE EXCALIBUR LIGHTHOUSE STANDS AND A SHIFTING LANDSCAPE OF ALIEN MIRAGES.

BY ELYON'S HORNED SPECS

THESE CROSS THE PHANTOMS ARE EVERYWHERE

NECROM IS HUNTING IN THIS NEARBY
I CAN SENSE HE IS NEAR

KY-LIN

SA'TNEEN?

IT CAN'T BE, YOU DIED!

I UNDERSTAND YOUR HESITATION MY LOVE BUT I AM REAL

SEE, I CAN TOUCH YOU

FORGIVE ME SA'TNEEN I LOVE YOU MORE THAN LIFE ITSELF

NO MY LOVE THOUGH SORELY WOUNDED MY MYSTICAL PROWESS DID RESTORE MY VIGOR--

--AM I NOT THE WITCH QUEEN OF EERATH?

AND I WILL NOT PERMIT
YOUR MORTAL REMAINS TO
BE POSSESSED

BY THIS
DISEASED
VERMIN

YOU CAN'T BE AS
POWERFUL AS YOU CLAIM
NEARONI OR YOU WOULDN'T
NEED TO RESORT TO SUCH
A DESPERATE PLOY

I THINK NOT YOUR
ENCOUNTER WITH FERON
AND MCGRIMM LEFT
YOU DEAD

YOU HOPED TO
BLUFF YOUR WAY
PAST ME YOU'VE
FEAR L'ZRIAS BLADES

AIE!

BUT I WAS
STOPPED WHEN
AROUND THE
CRACK THE
PHANTOMS ARE
NO MORE

NO IT
CANNOT BE
THE PHOENIX
IS STILL
DORMANT

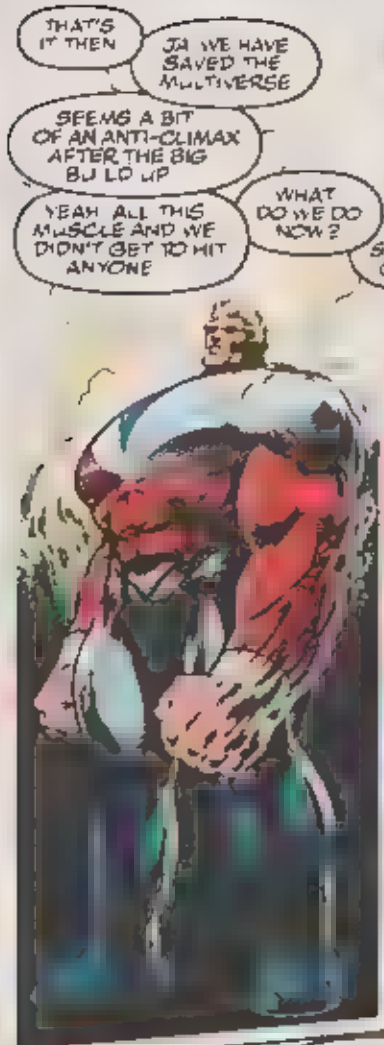
BARELY A DAY LEFT
IN ANOTHER WORLD
ON A DIFFERENT TIME
KYLEN LEFT HIS
WIFE AND CHILDREN
TO PROTECT HER KILLER

BE WITH
MAY NEARONI
GO BEHIND
US REACH

FIGHT
ME

NO
FIGHT ME
FIGHT ME

HE CAN
NO LONGER
SUPPRESS
HIS GRIEF



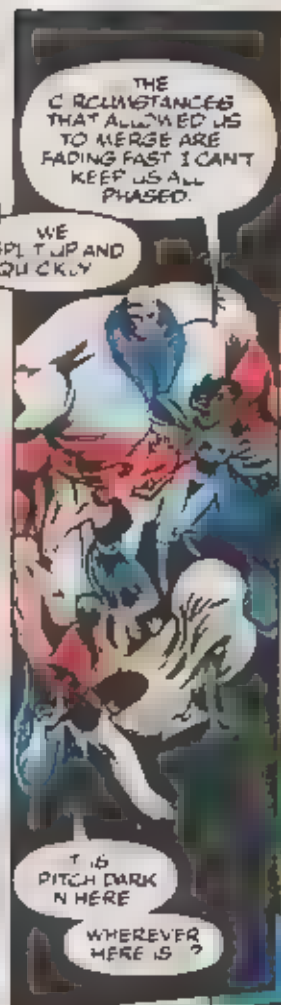
THAT'S IT THEN

JA WE HAVE SAVED THE MULTIVERSE

SEEMS A BIT OF AN ANTI-CLIMAX AFTER THE BIG BUILD UP

YEAH ALL THIS MUSCLE AND WE DIDN'T GET TO HIT ANYONE

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?



THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT ALLOWED US TO MERGE ARE FADING FAST I CAN'T KEEP US ALL PHASED.

WE SPLT UP AND QUICKLY

IT IS PITCH DARK N HERE

WHEREVER HERE IS ?



WE'RE ON OTHERWORLD~

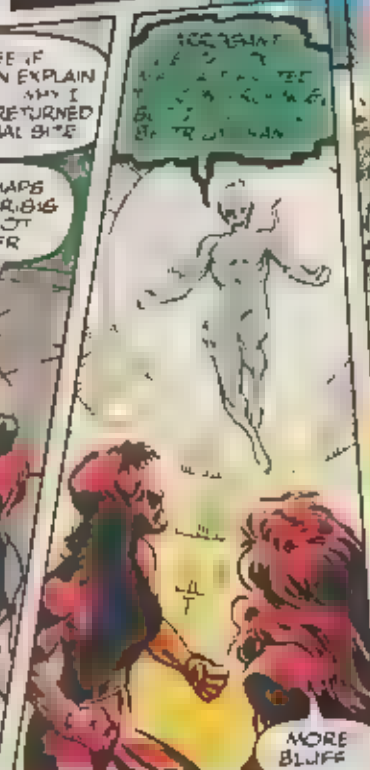


--GOOD LUCK. ONCE I'VE SQUEEZED HUFF THROUGH THIS BLASTED DOORWAY I'M BY

I'LL SEE IF ROMA CAN EXPLAIN WHY I HAVEN'T RETURNED TO NORMAL SIZE

PERHAPS THE CRISIS IS NOT OVER

OF COURSE IT SHIT WE HAVEN'T BEATEN NEUROM YET



SECRETARY

THEY SAY HE'S A LITTLE BIT OF A TRICKY

MORE BLUFF



THEY SAY HE'S A LITTLE BIT OF A TRICKY

WE'VE GOT TO TAKE AS MUCH AS WE CAN FROM OUR FRIENDS

YOU'VE GOT T
NECROM--I ALWAYS
KNEW IT WOULD
COME TO THIS

SORRY KURT YOU
WON'T STOP ME WITH
A NERVE PINCH--MY
TELEPATHY AND TELE-
KINESIS ARE BACK TO
FULL STRENGTH

BUT THANKS FOR
CARING ENOUGH TO
TRY.

PLEASE
RACHEL THERE
MUST BE ANOTHER
WAY

I TRULY WISH
THERE WAS, BUT
NECROM IS DESPER-
ATE HE'S HURT
DYING--HE HAS
NOTHING TO
LOSE

AND HE'S AN
ENERGY VAMPIRE
HE NEED ONLY MAKE
PHYSICAL CONTACT
TO KILL HE'S BOUND
TO GET AT LEAST
ONE OF YOU--I
COULDN'T LIVE
WITH THAT

BUT RACHEL
YOUR MEMORY
YOU MIGHT
DESTROY IT
FOREVER

YOUR FUTURE
IS MORE IMPORTANT
THAN MY PAST,
KIDDO

I'M
PHOENIX.

I ACCEPTED
THE POWER AND
NOW IT'S TIME
TO PROVE I'M
WORTHY OF
IT

WITH A SINGLE THOUGHT
RACHEL IS TRANSFORMED--

--AS THE COSMIC
AVATAR SHE HOSTS
ERUPTS FROM ITS
PSYCHIC CONFINES

IN THE SAME BEARING
INSTANT, SHE BIDS HER
FRIENDS A TELEPATHIC
FAREWELL

SO THEY SHARE
THE MOMENT OF
GLORIOUS ELATION...

...THAT IS ENGULFED BY
A SICK EMPTINESS AS
THE BURNING CELESTIAL
FORCE SHATTERS THEIR
TEAMMATE'S MEMORY
INTO A MIST OF SPIN-
NED REMINISCENCE

BUT RACHEL
IGNORES HER
LOSS.

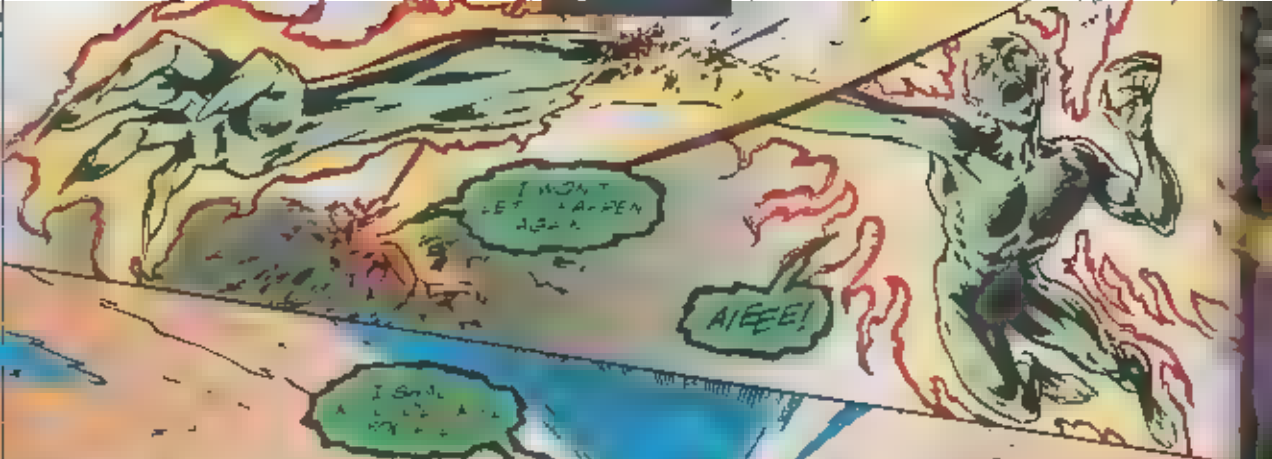
HER MIND IS
FOCUSED ON
THE PRESENT...

THE BATTLE
THE U.S. - GNT

WILL
BE
THIS

WAK

NO! I WATCHED
MY FRIENDS DIE IN
THE FUTURE



I WON'T
LET HAPPEN
AGAIN

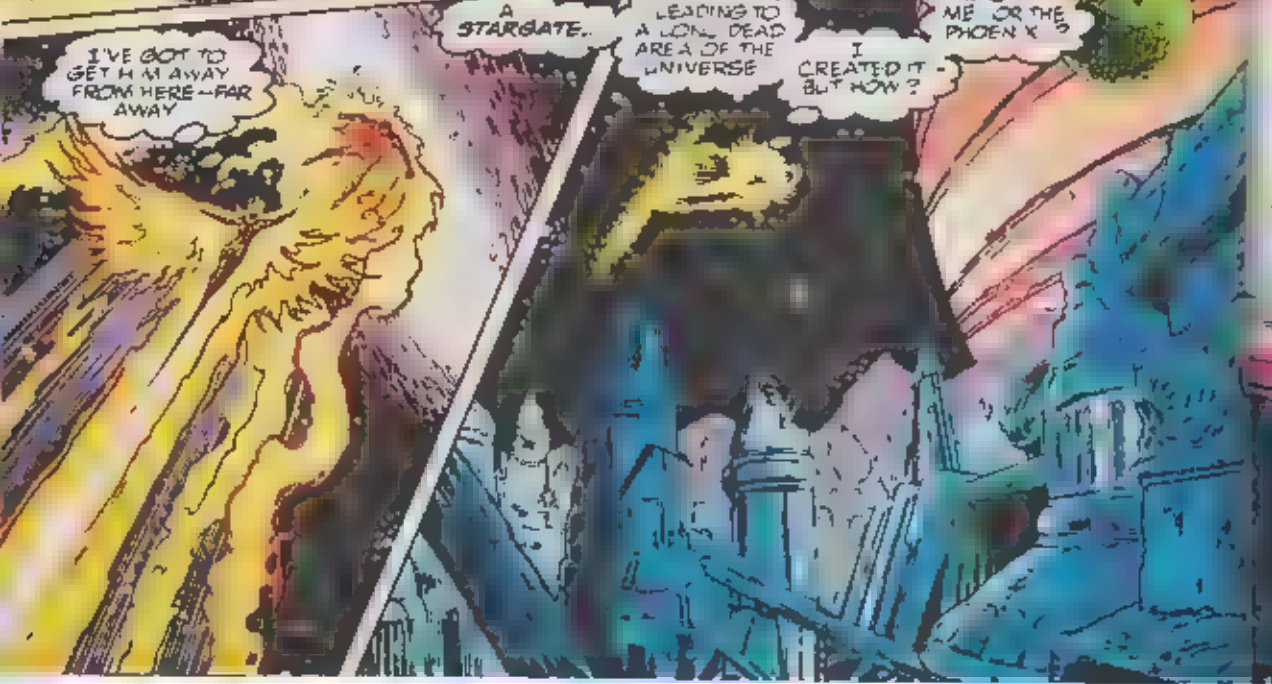
AIEEE!

I SHOULD
HAVE
KNOWN



NECROM'S
COMPLETELY OUT
OF CONTROL --
INTOXICATED
WITH POWER

EVEN THOUGH
HE'S FIGHTING WILDLY
HE'LL EVENTUALLY
HIT THE OTHERS



I'VE GOT TO
GET HIM AWAY
FROM HERE -- FAR
AWAY

A
STARGATE.

LEADING TO
A LONG, DEAD
AREA OF THE
UNIVERSE

I
CREATED IT --
BUT HOW?

WAS IT
ME OR THE
PHOENIX?

...SHE CANNOT AVOID
THE IRRESISTIBLE JET
DIRECTED AT HER

AND THOUGH SHE HALTS
HER DESCENT SCANT
SECONDS BEFORE THE
PLANET'S SURFACE IS
VAPORIZED.

YET SOME OTHER
SENSE ALERTS HER
TO DANGER.

IF THE
IMPACT DOESN'T
KILL HER.

AND I DON'T
PLAN TO LET HIM
RECOVER.

NECDUM
IS COMPLETELY
DISORIENTED.

THERE IS NO
SOUND OR
MOVEMENT

CONFIDENT OF HER
STORY, RACHEL
SWEDS DOWN
THROUGH THE AIR
LESS VOID

A
THOUSAND TONS
OF FOGGLED
CITY WILL

ETHER WAY
IT'S GIVEN ME AN
ADVANTAGE.





UH!
SOMETHING
PULLING
ME...

...I'M GETTING
HEAVIER

THE GAS
GIANT...

...ITS GRAVITY
INCREASING...

...IT'S
SHRINKING...

...GOT
TO PULL
CLEAR

MOONS...

HE THREW
MOONS AT ME

LINK!
NECROM
IGNITED THE
PLANET...

TURNED
IT INTO A
SUN...

JUST TO
INCINERATE
ME.



I CAN'T KEEP
RUNNING
S.O.

HA! I'LL
SHOW YOU THAT
YOU CANNOT STAND
AGAINST MY
SUPERIOR SKILLS

I'M A QUICK
LEARNER. EAT
SOLAR FLARE O
MIGHTY
TEACHER

ARRRGH!

YOU
DARE TO
HURT ME

THEN I
WILL TEACH
YOU WHAT
REAL POWER
CAN DO!

NECROM KEEPS
ESCALATING HIS
ATTACK. HE'S
DEVASTATED THIS
ENTIRE SOLAR
SYSTEM.

I CAN'T
CHANNEL
THAT LEVEL
OF POWER.

AND I
DON'T THINK
NECROM CAN
EITHER.

AND I'M
THROUGH
PLAYING BY
HIS RULES.

HE'S A BEAST
HE'S GOING TO
RESORT TO A
FULL-SCALE
ATTACK - AND YOU
DON'T KNOW
THE PHOENIX TO
ME.

ALL I NEED DO
IS OPEN YOUR LIFE
FORCE AND THE
PHOENIX ESSENCE
WILL BEHOLD TO
FOLLOW.

BARBARIAN
YOUR PRIMITIVE
INSTINCTS
BETRAY YOU.

THAT'S WHAT
I COUNTED ON
SUCKER.

OR HE WOULD
MAKE A DIRECT
ATTACK. INSTEAD
OF STRIKING AT
ME THROUGH OUR
SURROUNDINGS.

HE'S STILL
MANIPULATING
ME.

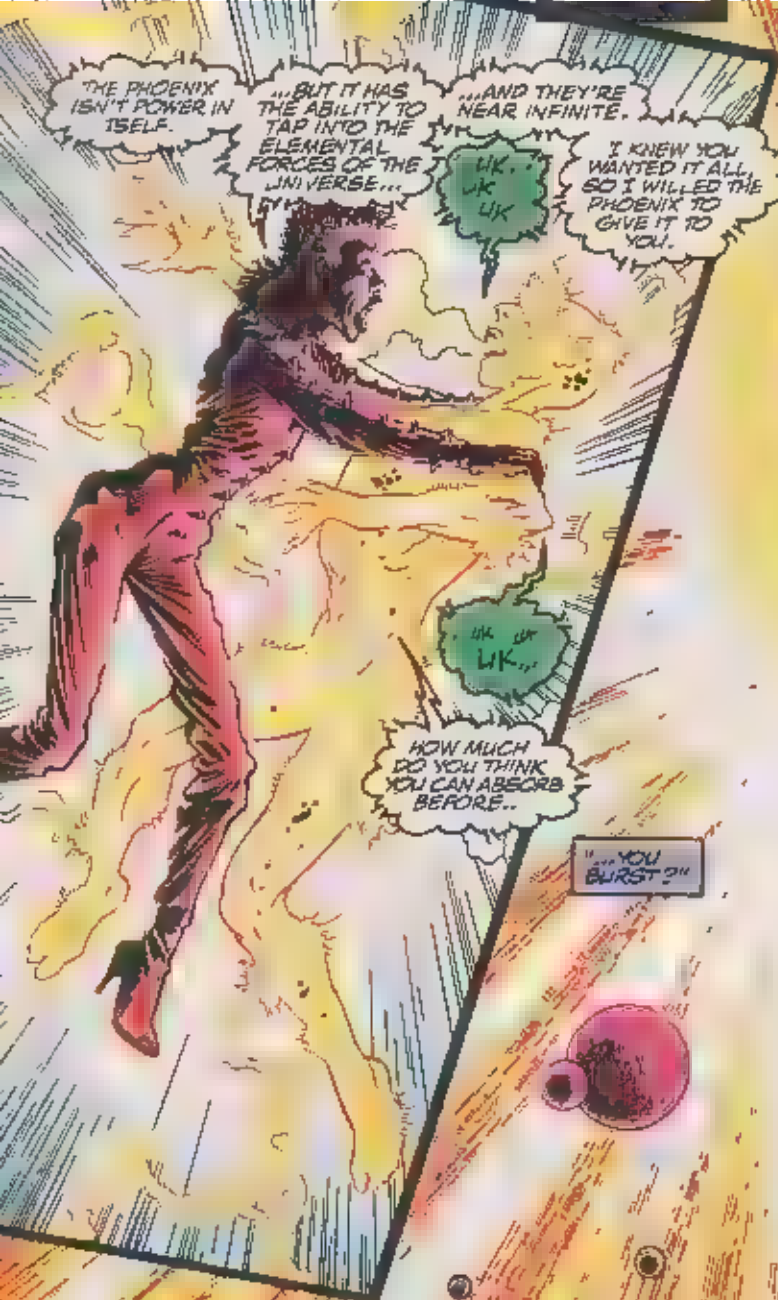
IT WAS
STALEMATE.

I COULDN'T
BEAT YOU
WITHOUT
RESORTING
TO YOUR
TACTICS.

...WE WOULD'VE
DESTROYED THE
UNIVERSE.

OK, JA
SHEILA

AND
HOLD YOU
DOWN TO
ME.



THE PHOENIX
ISN'T POWER IN
ITSELF.

...BUT IT HAS
THE ABILITY TO
TAP INTO THE
ELEMENTAL
FORCES OF THE
UNIVERSE...

...AND THEY'RE
NEAR INFINITE.

LIK.
LIK
LIK

I KNEW YOU
WANTED IT ALL,
SO I WILLED THE
PHOENIX TO
GIVE IT TO YOU.

LIK
LIK
LIK

HOW MUCH
DO YOU THINK
YOU CAN ABSORB
BEFORE...

"...YOU
BURST?"

NECROM NEVER
"HEARS" RACHEL'S
FINAL WORDS.

HE HAS ALREADY
EXPLODED INTO A
CLOUD OF DISCORPORATE
ATOMS THAT ARE
BLOWN INTO INFINITY...

...AS THE PHOENIX--REUNITED
WITH ITS STOLEN ESSENCE--
FLARES IN MAJESTIC
CELEBRATION.

WHEN THE DAZZLING
BRILLIANCE FADES,
A NEW HARMONY
SPREADS THROUGH THE
TORTURED ETHER

...AND NOTHING REMAINS
TO MARK THE EPIC BATTLE,
EXCEPT THE DEBRIS OF A
SHATTERED SOLAR SYSTEM.

AND A FRAIL
HUMAN FORM

FOR LONG
MINUTES IT HANGS
LIFELESSLY IN
THE COLD, DARK
AQUA!

THEN WITH
A SEARING
FLASH IT
VANISHES.

TO REAPPEAR ON
OTHERWORLD

LOOK!

IT'S
RACHEL

WHAT'S HAPPENED
TO HER? WHY IS SHE
IN THE ORIGINAL
PHOENIX
COSTUME?

OBVIOUS
PHYSICAL
DAMAGE

BREATHING
IS SHALLOW

PULSE
IS VERY
FAINT

NO
PUPILARY
RESPONSE.

SHE
APPEARS
TO BE
COMATOSE

BUT I AM AFRAID
I HAVE NO KNOWL-
EDGE OF WHAT
A LIES HER. THE
PHOENIX GUARDS
HER FROM MY
PERCEPTIONS

I HAVE
RETURNED
YOUR FRIEND
TO YOU..

ROMA, WHAT
THE DEVIL IS
GOING ON?

NECROW IS DEAD.
THE POWER PLAY IS
OVER

WITH JUST
ONE CASUALTY. A
MOST EXCELLENT
CONCLUSION.

I HAD ANTICIPATED
THAT NECROM WOULD
KILL AT LEAST TWO
OF YOUR NUMBER.

IT SURPRISED
ME THAT RACHEL
SUMMERS SHOULD
SACRIFICE SO MUCH
IN THE NAME OF
FRIENDSHIP.

ST. L.,
EVERY GAMBIT
HAS ITS RISK
ELEMENT.

MERLYN YOU
ARE ALIVE

HOW GENTLY SHE NURTURED
THE FORMATION OF YOUR GROUP.
MONITORING YOUR CRUDE POWERS
WITH SUBTLE PERSUASIONS—
SUCH AS THE CROSS-TIME CAPER.

DURING THAT AFFAIR,
YOU WERE ALL ACCLIMATIZED
TO THE RAVAGES OF UNPRO-
TECTED CROSS-TIME
TRANSIT...

A CLEVER PLOY, CAPABLY
EXECUTED, BUT NOT FULLY
SUCCESSFUL.

WHICH IS WHY I
WAS REQUIRED TO
DO A SMALL AMOUNT
OF FINE TUNING.

MOST
ABSOLUTELY MY
DEATH WAS A PLOY—
AN IMMORTAL
DOES NOT SIMPLY
DIE OF OLD AGE.

I REQUIRED
A PERIOD OF
ANONYMITY.

MY
DAUGHTER
WAS A MORE
THAN ADEQUATE
CARETAKER IN
MY ABSENCE.

WHILE RACHEL
WAS UNCONSCIOUSLY
EXERCISING HER
TEMPORAL CONTROL.

SO IT
WAS YOU WHO
MASQUERADED
AS MYRD.

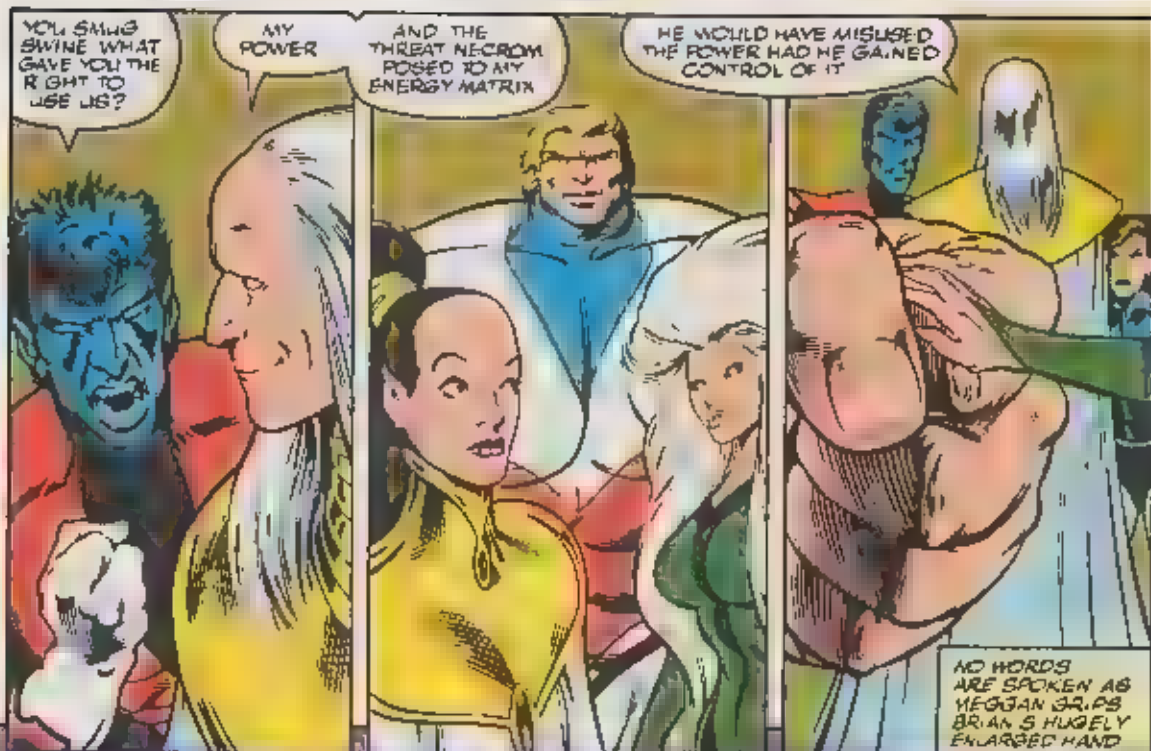
YES THE POSSESSION
INCIDENT WAS NECESSARY
TO PREPARE YOUR
PSYCHES FOR THEIR
RECENT MERGER.

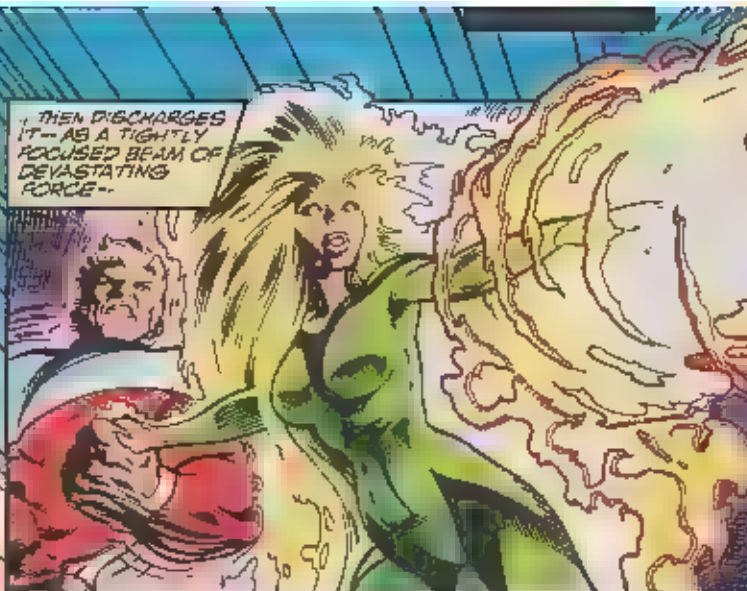
THE EVENT WAS
PURE FANTASY
PLAYED OUT IN THE
SUBCONSCIOUS MIND
OF ALBERT STUART.

IT AMUSED ME
TO PLAY A ROLE
I WAS MYRD.


AND THEN SE
OLD MERLYN
OF LEGEND.

AND LATER ON
OTHERWORLD THE
OLD CHESS
PLAYER.






THEN DISCHARGES
IT-- AS A TIGHTLY
FOCUSED BEAM OF
DEVASTATING
FORCE--




--INTO A SINGLE
SQUARE CENTIMETER
AT THE BASE OF THE
TOWER WALL



ZOT




.. THAT SPREAD INTO
A SPLINTERING WEB.



IT EXPANDS RAPIDLY
GROWING NUMEROUS
BRANCHES ..

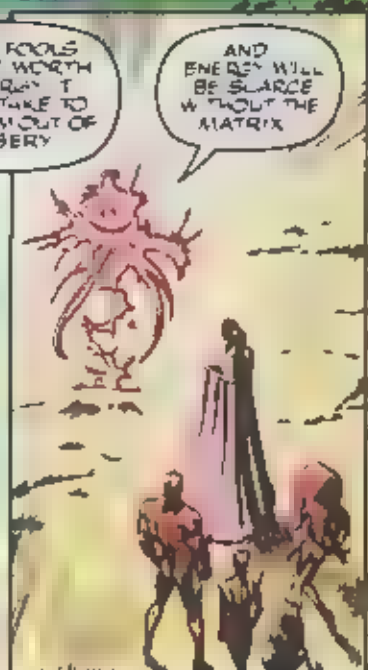
A MINUTE
CRACK
APPEARS.



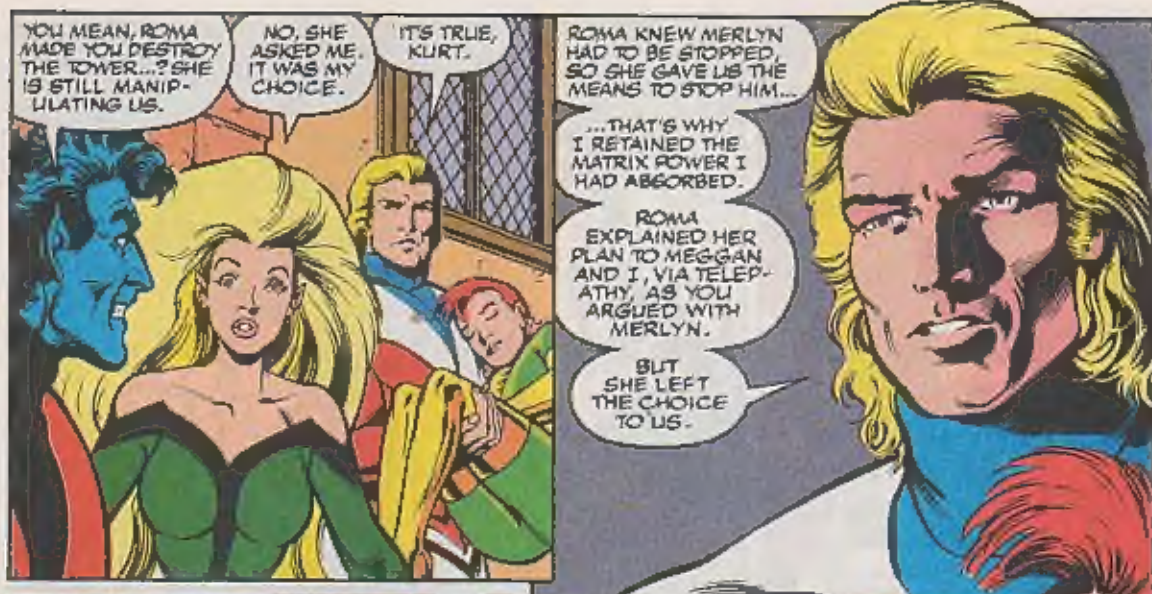
AND, ACROSS
EVERY PLANE
OF REAL TV.

THE COVER IN
ALL ITS DIVERSE
FORMS

-DISINTEGRATES







YOU MEAN, ROMA MADE YOU DESTROY THE TOWER...? SHE IS STILL MANIPULATING US.

NO, SHE ASKED ME. IT WAS MY CHOICE.

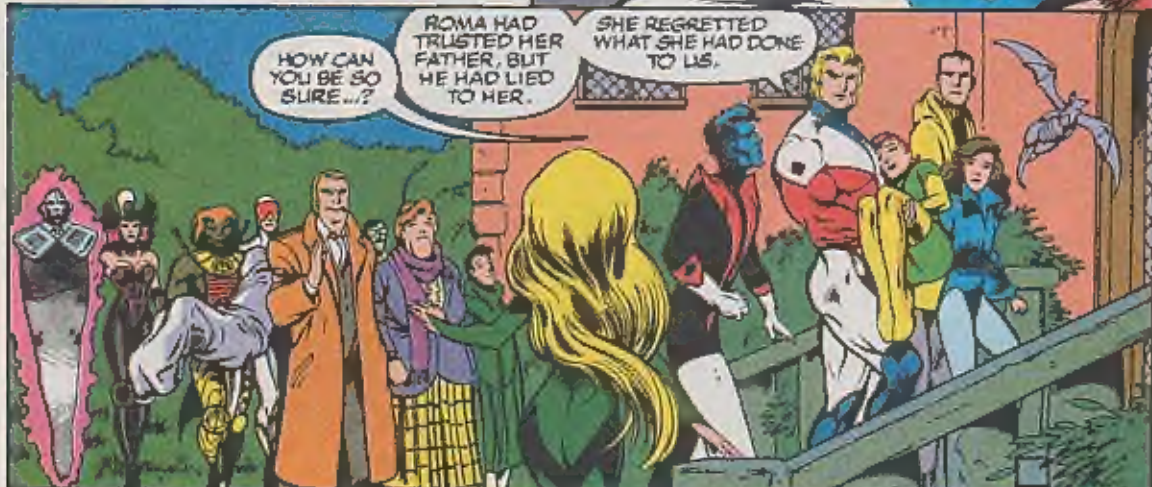
IT'S TRUE, KURT.

ROMA KNEW MERLYN HAD TO BE STOPPED, SO SHE GAVE US THE MEANS TO STOP HIM...

...THAT'S WHY I RETAINED THE MATRIX POWER I HAD ABSORBED.

ROMA EXPLAINED HER PLAN TO MEGGAN AND I, VIA TELEPATHY, AS YOU ARGUED WITH MERLYN.

BUT SHE LEFT THE CHOICE TO US.



HOW CAN YOU BE SO SURE...?

ROMA HAD TRUSTED HER FATHER, BUT HE HAD LIED TO HER.

SHE REGRETTED WHAT SHE HAD DONE TO US.



I WISH I HAD YOUR FAITH, BRIAN.

I KNOW ROMA, KURT. I THINK WE CAN TRUST HER.

SHE WANTED US TO HAVE A FRESH START, AS FREE AGENTS.

THE MANIPULATION IS OVER.

WE'RE NOBODY'S PAWNS NOW.

NEXT ISSUE:
DON'T DRINK
THE WATER

SWORD STROKES

% MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

TERRY KAVANAUGH
EDITOR
MARK POWERS
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Hey, Terry.

"Air Apparent," the newest EXCALIBUR Special Edition was a visual smorgasbord. Ron Lim, exceptional new talent Brian Stelfreeze, Jackson Guice, Karl Story, Walt Simonson, etc., etc., etc. Wow. And Scott Lobdell's story was very good. He managed to mix action, adventure and humor quite nicely into an entertaining finished product.

When's the next Special slated to appear?

Elvis Orten
17650 Dawson Rd.
Dawson Springs, KY 42408

Happy to hear you enjoyed it, Elvis — off of the mail on the Special Edition was positive. As far as another Special, look for it in May — with a lot of the same creators, and a few extra surprises!

Dear Sword Strokes,

I've just finished EXCALIBUR's Special Edition, "Air Apparent." It was marvelous! Brian, Kurt, and Dana did a great job on Kurt in Chapter 2. Seeing shoppers in the mall treat Kurt like a celebrity even after he fought with a nuclear robot was a breath of fresh air. Any other "X" title would have had an angry mob shouting for mutant blood instead of a crowd of fans yelling compliments.

Could someone please clear up Brian's explanation of Anawak's cosmic level explosion not affecting Earth? Thanks.

Brock Hammon
108 Short Street
Ives, KY 41542

Gez, Brock, you must mean when Brian thought, "Just as I theorized — the explosion took place on a cosmic level...while the mutants were unaffected. A perfectly sound scientific theory." Well...it's just like he said — perfectly sound. So what's to explain?

Dear Sword Strokes,

This is the first time I have written to an American Marvel publication, but the standard of EXCALIBUR is just so high that I had to. I have been a firm fan of the comic for a few years now. Marvel UK only manages to put out one super-hero title: THE COMPLETE SPIDER-MAN. I am proud of Marvel UK for their release of KNIGHTS OF PENDRAGON, but I was very disappointed when they cancelled the Punisher's weekly title in 1989, after cancelling such other UK titles as DEATH'S HEAD and MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS.

Thankfully though, there is the good of USA and the amazing American Marvel team. Did you know that EXCALIBUR is just about the only Marvel USA comic that is available here at local newsagents. It is more widely available than any other American comic.

Well, that's about it, except for a small mention to Damian Lee, EXCALIBUR's second biggest British fan. Please print my full address for anyone who wants a British Marvel-like pen pal. A promised reply to everyone who writes.

Attention correspondents: if you don't want your full address printed, please be sure to tell us so!

Andrew Steel
13 Bain Avenue
Halebury, York
England YO6 2PZ

Thanks for the news about EXCALIBUR in Britain, Andrew. We sure hope you'll be able to answer all the letters you might receive!

Dear Sword Strokes,

Who do you think will take it...the Bills or the Redskins? Just curious. By the way, the new Excalibur mushroom is...sheh...excuse me, it's...hee-hee...snicker...I don't know if I can...mwaa-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!

Well, anyway, Alan Davis is doing a...I can't believe it's really a mushroom! wonderful job since his...heh! return to the book. It's great to see...oh yeah! this book return to...sniff! its former glory.

I just wanted to...it really is a mushroom! I can't believe it!

Monkeys in the Jungle Studios
7202 Calumet
Amarillo, TX 79106

Well, by now the big game is a foregone conclusion, but the mushroom sure isn't...as we're sure you already noticed this issue!

Dear Sword Strokes,

I started buying EXCALIBUR about a year ago. I love the N-Men. Finally, Nightcrawler is getting some respect! I also like what you're doing with the good Captain. And by the way — I don't like the idea of a dragon and an alien having a physical relationship in my comic book!

So until Saturnyne grows a beard, Make Mine Marvel!

Zachary Johnson
48-255 Apt. 800A Kahuipo St.
Kaneohe, HI 96744

How about a unicorn and a griffin, Zachary?

Dear Sword Strokes,

I am writing this letter to compliment you on EXCALIBUR. It is the best comic around! You have the best art and the best characters. Also, Kitty, Phoenix, and Meggan are the most beautiful characters I have seen! Speaking of Phoenix, it is because of her that I found EXCALIBUR.

I have just finished issue #45 and I loved it! I especially liked the N-Men and was wondering if they will be appearing anymore with Excalibur.

Continue the great job on EXCALIBUR and until Widget is turned into scrap metal, Make Mine Marvel!

Ian Fountain
12031 Amherst Ct.
Plymouth, MI 48170

All of the letters we received on issue #45 praised the N-Men, Ian. Check out the next few...

Dear Sword Strokes,

I think EXCALIBUR is great! I have a lot

of comics, but EXCALIBUR and X-MEN are my favorites!

I would like to tell you how much I loved EXCALIBUR #45! I liked it because of the N-Men. I think they deserve their own comic.

I would like to see more of Widget. He is my favorite character! And I really hope Meggan finds out more about herself.

Until Widget explodes, Make Mine Marvel!

Colin Cherry
HC 859360 Hiland Rd.
Eagle River, AK 99577

Although the N-Men were incredibly popular, Colin, they will not be regular characters in EXCALIBUR. We think it's about time, now that nearly all the loose threads have been wrapped up, to focus on the team and their struggles. We don't think you'll be disappointed!

Dear Sword Strokes,

I LOVED THE N-MEN!

Seriously, I have never written to a comic book before, but after issue #45, I just had to write and tell you what I thought. This has to be one of the best and funniest issues yet (next to issue #14). The art was superb as usual — thank goodness Alan's back! The script was both funny and gripping.

Nightcrawler has always been my favorite character in any comic book, and I have liked the Technet since I first saw them in the EXCALIBUR Special. When you put them both together, I fall in love with the concept! Nightcrawler looks hilarious with that cast. I have a few questions for you:

1. Are we going to be seeing more of the N-Men (besides these next few issues)?
2. Can anybody in the Technet talk besides Thug, Fem2 and Chinadoll?
3. Does anybody in this group have above a 2nd grade education?
4. Is Pingtoss male or female?
5. Is there a chance of an N-Men Limited Series?

Thanks for your time.

Chris Blanchard
1047 Broadway
Chula Vista, CA

1. Check out the answer above, Chris.
2. Numbers can talk, as well as Snee and Gatecrasher, members of Technet who left Earth in issue #45.
3. They've all come from other dimensions / planets! Talk about culture shock!
4. Does it matter?
5. Not in the near future. Sorry!

Dear Sword Strokes,

At last the mysterious "world through the bathroom (wasn't it originally a cellar) door" sub-plot has been tied with the rest of reality (or has it?). How you kept the secret for 45 issues, I don't know. Alan, you really are a first-class story-teller — your artwork is so clear and well-defined, working with Mark as well as it did with Paul. Thankfully, you kept the book's humor just right so that EXCALIBUR remains funny but not inept. Keep Meggan a sweet, innocent child; she really is one-of-a-kind.

Until Brian cuts his hair a bit shorter,
Make Mine Marvel.

Nick Gulliver
4 Wood End
Crowthorne, Berkshire
England

The bathroom certainly has gotten a
lot of attention lately. Check out the next
letter, Nick!

Dear Sword Strokes,

In regards to Aaron Leopold's letter in
issue #45, ARE YOU NUTS?

EXCALIBUR is one of the best titles
Marvel has! Sure, some of the stories are a
little unbelievable, but come on! They're so
funny! The Technet is priceless! The characters' strengths and weaknesses mesh in a
way I haven't seen since X-MEN.

So until Kitty leaves Excalibur, Make Mine
Marvel!

James Elliott
2836C 11th Ave. S.E.
Calgary, Alberta
Canada T2A 1G4

Everyone's entitled to an opinion,
James! (But almost every letter-writer
feels the way you do about this book!)

Dear Terry and Mark,

Oh yeah! The N-Men have arrived! It's
about time you gave Nightcrawler more
recognition. I'd like to see three things in his
future:

1. The new leader of Excalibur.
2. A romance.
3. A spotlight issue on him, perhaps discussing his relationship with Mystique... please!

On a different note, everybody else in the
book sees action except Excalibur. Enough
with the character depth for now and let's
kick some butt!

Otherwise, I'm extremely impressed with
everything — especially Mr. Davis's drawings. Wunderbar! Until the N-Men have
crumpets and tea for lunch, Make Mine
Marvel!

Kenn Westman
509 Bonwood Ct.
Eufess, TX 76038

Is Necrom and the Anti-Phoenix
enough of a "light" for you, Kenn? Hope
so!

Dear Sword Strokes,

I'm a big fan of EXCALIBUR, ever since I
first saw them on their Marvel Trading Cards
team picture. That's when I started collecting
the comics. I'm writing for the first time, so I
don't know what to say. Actually, I have a
question that I hope you can answer: Who is
Kylun?

Armand Alberto
135 Williams St.
Philadelphia, PA 19148

We think issue #45 answered your
question better than we could have,
Armand!

Dear Sword Strokes,

Oh, wow! Is this valiant upholding of the
Comics Code, or what? Kurt should get a
CCA medal. Even though he was fighting for
his life and jumping all over page 8 in issue
#45, that loosely-tucked towel stayed right in

place. Way to go, Kurt! Death before de-low-
eling! I'm impressed.

That makes twice that a new guy has
moved into the lighthouse and trashed the
toilet, though I hope this isn't going to be a
recurring theme. I also hope they had the
good sense to install a few extras while
remodeling.

Things have been very interesting lately. I
can't wait 'til everyone gets back together.
Should be good. Meanwhile, what's Colin's
mutant talent? And what's Kitty been up to at
that dig?

Sharia Hardy
769 M St.
Davis, CA 95616

And your questions have been
answered before we could even print
your letter, Sharia!

Dear Sword Strokes,

How do you determine who will do the art
or write for EXCALIBUR?

Until Excalibur's lighthouse goes condo,
Make Mine Marvel!

James Scheibel
8803 Muller Drive
Edwardsville, IL 62025

Good question, James. It's the job of
the editor to find the creative people he or
she thinks would be best for each book.
Lots of things go into making a decision,
including who is available and what style
would best fit the book. Such decisions
certainly aren't always easy, but everyone
seems to agree on one thing — Alan
Davis has done a terrific job bringing
back the magic to EXCALIBUR!

Dear Sword Strokes,

Re: EXCALIBUR #45

Reading this issue gave me mixed emotions. As thrilling as the art and revelation of
Colin the Barbarian is, they still couldn't
make up for a sense of loss that came at the
resolution of an outstanding plot-line. I am, of
course, referring to Meggan's newfound
knowledge of her true form. I guess that all
things must come to an end.

As a die-hard Nightcrawler fan I must prof-
usely thank Mr. Davis for the latest issues
that have put Kurt in the spotlight. Once
again, we humble readers are seeing Kurt's
depth as a character and his bitterness of
spirit (even with a broken leg!)

Brook Harmon
106 Short St.
Ivins, KY 41842

Maybe we shouldn't be reminding you
of this, Brook, but Meggan's search is far
from over. Yes, she has one small piece
of the puzzle, but she still knows nothing
about where she is from or her parents.
So don't worry — we've left some myster-
ies unsolved!

Dear Sword Strokes,

I guess I'll start my letter the same way
everyone else starts their letters (sigh)...I
REALLY LOVED EXCALIBUR #45!!!! It was
probably one of the best EXCALIBUR
comics I've seen since the first ten issues.
I've been following EXCALIBUR ever since
issue #1. But, after a couple of issues of
"The Cross-Time Caper," I was a little bored
and confused. I couldn't keep track of all
those alternate realities and alternate per-
sonalities.

This issue, though, really made sense out
of the others. It made some sense of past
occurrences, tying them into the current
story. I also really enjoyed another appear-
ance of the Neut. I thought they were really
cool in WOLVERINE: BLOODLUST.

Okay, I have some questions:

1. Are you ever going to have the real X-
Men in this comic? I mean, half the team
originated in the X-Men, so I think you could
spare an appearance.

2. Are you ever going to have any new
members join?

3. Are you going to give up this alternate
dimension deal? I hope so.

4. Has Nightcrawler ever jumped from a
skyscraper and teleported a second before
he hit the ground? That would be cool...

So until Captain Britain gets the Captain
Universe powers and saves the whole world
from destruction, Make Mine Marvel!

Jim Woolbridge
(Address withheld upon request)

Okay, we have some answers, Jim!

1. The real X-Men were in this comic!
Okay, maybe not in person, but the two
teams have talked with each other via
video screen and they are in contact.
Check out issue #52 for a face-to-face
meeting between Excalibur and key
members of the X-Men!

Dear Terry and Mark,

I just wanted to write and let you know
how much I've enjoyed the last several
months of EXCALIBUR. It's amazing how
Alan Davis has managed to tie up the
numerous plot threads left dangling over the
past few years, all the while keeping the stories
fresh and entertaining each month. In
my opinion, EXCALIBUR has surpassed the
X-MEN and SPIDER-MAN as Marvel's
hottest book.

In addition to the stories, Alan Davis and
Mark Farmer have proven to be the most
well-matched penciler/inker team since
Byrne/Austin way back when. Alan draws
such life-like people that I start to forget that
these characters are fictional! Usually, no
matter how well-drawn a character is, he or
she is so idealized by the artist that the character
begins to appear generic. Not so in
Alan's work! His versions of Brian, Meggan,
Rachel, Kurt, Kitty, and even Widgeo are
simultaneously heroic-looking and individual-
ized. I mean, Kitty actually looks like a
young woman, rather than the kid or fully-
grown adult she usually appears as. And, of
course, Mark maintains these qualities—in
fact, he enhances them. Even Glynis
Oliver's colors stand out as superior work. I
think that she's the best colorist in the busi-
ness!

Oh well, that's enough unrestrained flattery
for now. One thing I would like to see in
the coming months, however, is an appear-
ance by one of the "alternate realities"
Excalibur teams.

Robin Locksley
4 Hyannis Dr.
Old Bridge, NJ 08857

Our esteemed creative team sincerely
appreciates your praise, Robin. In this
letter's page, flattery will get you every-
where! And as for Excalibur teams from
alternate realities...

NEXT ISSUE: As Excalibur rallies around
the comatose Phoenix, dinosaurs run
rampant through Britain...and wait 'til
you see who arrives to restrain them!